Capka and Houng Soo worked initially on developing the many inputs that formed the concept. As they moved on to other positions, Colonel Fred Parker along with Lieutenant Colonels Russ Fuhrman and Tom Farewell and Major Al Carroll, picked up the baton to push the concept on throughout the Army. They all did yeoman work over long hours.

General Kem (center) received the Distinguished Service Medal from the Commander of the Training and Doctrine Command, General Maxwell Thurman (left), at the Change of Command Ceremony at the Engineer School on 6 July 1987. Ann Kem is on the right.

Deputy Chief of Staff, Engineer, USAREUR

Q: You went to Europe to become Deputy Chief of Staff, Engineer, U.S. Army Europe. That was July or August 1987, after you'd finished your tour as commandant at Belvoir. How did you get that job, how did the opportunity come up, and how was it connected with your time as commandant at the Engineer School?

A: Well, while I was still commandant at the Engineer School, General Vuono, commander of TRADOC, asked me what I wanted to do next. Well, I told him I wasn't sure. I wanted to stay involved where things were going on, either in the Pentagon; Headquarters, USACE; or

back to Europe. This conversation was taking place in probably the January–February time frame.

At the same time, he asked me to suggest my replacement, and I told him I thought my replacement should be Dan Schroeder, who had a very strong combat engineer background. However, at the time he was only a brigadier general, and I also indicated then that General Reno, serving as a major general, would be appropriate too. I knew that General Reno had very strong bonds with General Vuono and General Thurman, and that would be helpful in our progressing and bringing to decision the E–Force concept because I thought all the groundwork had been laid. What we needed was to really get in with those two decision makers and push it through. I sensed that, having pushed it so hard, that my own credibility with the two of them was a little bit suspect, even though we had a lot of other nonengineers, combat arms types, speaking for E–Force. Nevertheless, they were being rather difficult to push the concept through. So, I thought General Reno was in a perfect position to do that.

As it turned out, General Reno was appointed my successor, but he only stayed a year, and General Schroeder, having been promoted, then followed him. So, that was an early conversation. Then, I suppose shortly thereafter, I talked with General Heiberg, the Chief of Engineers, and told him essentially the same thing. He indicated that he thought nothing would be changing at Headquarters, USACE, and thought he'd like to see me go over to Europe to be the DCSENGR. So, I told him that sounded fine to me, and then I let things happen.

How it happened, after that, must have been conversations between General Heiberg and the General Officer Management Office, or General Heiberg and the Commander in Chief in Europe. I was nominated and accepted, and that was it.

Then in July I replaced Major General Scott Smith, who was the DCSENGR in Europe.

Q: The USAREUR commander then was General Otis?

A: Yes, Glenn Otis. General Fiala was the Chief of Staff at the time, of course also with an engineer background.

Q: A sort of broad question, but how had DCSENGR changed since you'd been there in '78, '79? DCSENGR itself, I guess the USAREUR staff agency?

A: Well, I guess things had changed. Now that I think about it, there were several things that had changed. First of all, as mentioned, I had been the Chief of Installations and Construction Division as a colonel, and that certainly was a two-colonel job. Subsequently, after a year or so, it had gone back, and so there now was an Installations Division and a Construction Division. That better divided responsibilities so you could have the right amount of attention to each.

Next, the construction mission had grown considerably in that the program was so much bigger. I left there in '79 and, as I mentioned, participated back in the Army Staff prior to the start of the Reagan administration. The Reagan defense buildups had led to much-increased

European construction programs. So, the construction side of DCSENGR responsibilities had really increased.

The things that I had been working on that had taken up most of my time earlier in ’78–’79 was the rapid reinforcement of NATO initiative, getting the three divisions of POMCUS in, building the warehouses, getting them sited. All the infrastructure work from before had basically now been completed. Thus, the separate section that I had set up to handle that initiative had now gone away.

We were back to a more fundamental split. Installations Division was still working on stationing and those kinds of responsibilities. Stationing had, from when I was there in ’79, moved from DCSOPS over to the DCSENGR. We had been part of the initial action, but now it was fundamentally locked into DCSENGR. Installations Division, then, were the ones who carried the ownership of the stationing requirement. Consequently, as we found out a year later, when I was Chief of Staff, when it came to starting planning the drawdowns from Europe, and what stationing changes would happen, Installations Division became a very integral player in that.

In addition, though, another thing that had just been established when I arrived at DCSENGR in 1979 was ISAE, the Installation Support Activity, Europe. In 1986, before I arrived in 1987 as the DCSENGR, General Otis had streamlined the headquarters, and he had abolished ISAE. Remember, I had arrived just after certain implementation and execution responsibilities were sent to ISAE, leaving only programming and so forth in the headquarters. I arrived back as DCSENGR in 1987 to have certain things under my responsibility that weren’t there in ’79. Primary among that was the support of the facility engineers in Europe that had been at ISAE.

In ’79 General Heiberg, as the DCSENGR, could look down to Charlie McNeill as the colonel commanding ISAE who would take care of installation facility engineer support. He would look to the divisions in the headquarters in Heidelberg to take care of the other responsibilities.

Now, in 1987, I had a facilities engineer support directly under me. It was quite tailored down. Quite a bit of what had been ISAE was eliminated and not duplicated and pushed to the field, such as the technical support teams that would go out from ISAE and assist installations. We no longer had those at USAREUR level. We were to operate at a much higher kind of level.

We had the environmental expertise and those kinds of things where we would take care of the programming and policy responsibilities and provide some limited assistance in those special areas. So, there had been some considerable shift back.

Another change had been the strengthening, over time, of the combat engineer function, even though the DCSOPS maintained that overall responsibility. The military engineer function had grown, and we had a colonel in charge, and there was more activity. This was representative of the knowledge over time that—and this is a key point for all to understand

when one speaks of USAREUR—that in wartime it is not a fighting organization but the theater Army organization. CINCUSAREUR moves up and commands the Central Army Group, a NATO command, to fight the war. USAREUR headquarters, under command of the Deputy Commander in Chief, becomes the theater Army in support of all U.S. activities in theater.

Consequently, the 412th Engineer Command out of Vicksburg, a reserve brigade with multiple battalions all over the United States under various groups, was the theater engineer command element. Because they were a reserve activity and our planning was an active activity, over time, we had a larger military engineer section in the headquarters. The 412th Engineer Command had a liaison element in Europe, with a person from their headquarters, and we then set up rather good working relationships with the commander of the FORSCOM units and their staffs, so that when they'd come over for various exercises—and they were over there a lot with the annual REFORGER exercises—we had a link.

Q: Well, prior to your getting there, the USAREUR staff had been undergoing, and maybe continued to undergo, quite a few changes. I guess one of the pressures was to reduce the size of the USAREUR staff, coming from Congress or from Washington.

A: Yes, probably I could get into that a little later.

Q: Okay.

A: I mean, if we take it chronologically.

Q: Okay.

A: I had a year as DCSENGR, and then a year as Chief of Staff.

Q: Okay.

A: When I arrived in '87 as the DCSENGR, replacing Scott Smith, General Otis had made the decisions to reduce the staff, and ISAE elimination was one aspect of that. Scott Smith had already implemented that. So, although the bumps hadn't all been smoothed out, basically the people were in place in the new locations, or had been done away with, or moved, and responsibilities were shifted.

So, I really picked up an organization that was a going organization, albeit in its changed style from the Otis changes. During that year there were not more changes. I sense that Scott Smith acted quickly and maybe was ahead of some of the other staff agencies who were still changing, but from my viewpoint, in my year as DCSENGR, there were not more changes.

However, then, in the summer of '88, General Otis retired and General Fiala retired. General Saint came over as the new Commander in Chief, and I became the Chief of Staff. During that year we had had changes due to a couple of different things, the driving part of that being General Saint and his approach on how things were to be done. One other aspect of it was something that happened back in the last months of General Otis's and General Fiala's reign.

A team headed by the Deputy Inspector General of the Department of Defense, Derek Vander Shaaf, came over on a worldwide trip with the goal of cutting out spaces in Europe.

General Fiala had chaired those sessions where we all briefed the Vander Shaaf team on our responsibilities. The results of that effort weren't enacted until later, when I was Chief of Staff. That became the second factor driving changes in organization in the year '88–'89.

Q: Okay. Well, we'll probably come back to that.

A: Be sure and ask me about Vander Shaaf's methods later.

Q: Well, I'd like to go into the various elements you talked about: facilities engineering, construction, some of those things. What were the budget trends affecting USAREUR, affecting the engineers while you were DCSENGR?

A: Well, budgets were still up. We were fairly well funded, but it was beginning to turn. I guess we were executing a pretty good budget, but the budgets we were programming and planning for were on the downturn. So, that's always difficult.

Then my second year was even more difficult. There was a lot of talk at this time about the Germans and the NATO allies carrying more of the load. Congress was filled with people crying that they weren't carrying their share of the burden. That wasn't new because I heard it back when I was in the Office of the DCSENGR before, again in the years on the Army Staff, and it seemed just like a popular refrain—even though multitudes of words and statistics and graphs were displayed that showed who was carrying what load with respect to what. Nevertheless, it was just popular to say the United States was paying too much.

Well, it may be popular to say that, but then energetic staffers and other groups would form to try to make those kinds of things happen. So, there was always that business.

The essence of all that was that things were starting to turn down. I came back for a meeting about the construction program that Major General Bob Dacey, the ACE, had chaired, with all commands present, when he tried to grapple with the program. The numbers escape me for a moment, but it was something like we had all started by putting in 1,800 projects, and the last bit of guidance we received was that only about 600 projects would make the cut, and now we were trying to stuff it all down into 200 projects. Every command was there. I mean, here we were, USAREUR, a third of the United States Army, but also individual installations: West Point, Alaska. I mean, all sizes and shapes of commands were there. Of course, Bob Dacey had a difficult problem: how's he going to patch all this together in a cohesive program?

It was really not a very satisfactory affair, from our standpoint. It just couldn't happen logically. We also had, then, all of the have-tos: people at the the Department of the Army headquarters stuffing in their projects: a new headquarters for AMC; finish Fort Drum—it was well under way, so we had to finish that. All of these kinds of things were top down "drivers" and, of course, they would push out multiple projects of the rest of us.

Well, Fort Drum was understandable because we were just about wrapped up there. Army strategy, really, was to do that. Then to add an AMC headquarters into a pot already filled with a TRADOC headquarters—that is two headquarters in the same program—didn't seem like that would ever fly in the Congress. I didn't think we, basically, had a method of coming up with a capital investment strategy in the Army.

So, on return to Europe, I prepared a briefing for General Otis, and later to General Vuono, and sent it back to General Heiberg and General Dacey, which proposed a capital investment approach instead of the usual—everybody throw your projects through your headquarters to the ACE, who then had to grapple with such a large number of projects. This also included a lot of up-front executive time spent on developing the forums and everything to have the support for a project, when most of the projects wouldn't have a chance of making the program, and then all the late entries from the higher headquarters would stuff things out. Then came the annual, "Gotta cut it back," and we would get a budget number from the ACE's shop to cut back the military construction program.

A better approach, I thought, would be to come up with a concept strategy over what the banding might be, have that portrayed to the senior Army commanders at the Army commanders conferences, get a buy in up front about how much should be spent for headquarters, how much should be spent to finish Fort Drum, how much should be spent for Patriot facilities worldwide, how much should be spent to take care of troops, how much should be spent for the Chapel of the Year program, et cetera.

The problem had been that anytime something got stuffed in, the things that fell out were the things that took care of troops. So, we in Europe were hollering, "Top priority." In Korea, they were hollering, "Top priority." Then when the budget pinches came, you had to finish Drum, you had to have the headquarters, and the chaplain had to have his chapel, and the troop projects fell out.

So, the thought was get the commanders to agree on what were the bounds. They could agree that we had room for two headquarters, AMC and TRADOC, or only one this year and one next year. They could make those kinds of decisions. Then the commands could stuff things in and compete for, in terms of justification, the right to fill up the bands with certain types of projects. Then, when the cutting came, or when another great new idea came, somebody could then look at that band and say, "If it is a new headquarters, it ought to compete in the headquarters band, and let it compete there, not over the whole program, knocking off the troop projects."

It seemed like a better way to run the process. So, I proposed the change, yet it's never come about.

Q: It's still pretty much a large hopper with hundreds of projects in it.

A: Well, I don't know. I've been away from it too long to know, but I'd say that. Then there is this new thing called moratoriums. You put the whole construction program in a moratorium,

with approvals only for certain exceptions. Well, that sort of kills any thought of having a logical, appropriate capital investment program.

Nevertheless, the fact is that industry and others set aside so much for capital investment for the future and so much for current operations as a certain basis of understanding, and the board of directors and chief executives are the ones who participate in establishing those levels and the trade-offs between them, as opposed to the way we do it.

For example, Op Tempo for training is established as a budget entity. Op Tempo means so many flying hours per year and so many tank hours per year. That's an operating kind of function—training—and very important in the Army, no doubt about it.

Then when the division commander comes in and says, "I can't achieve that training tempo unless I buy more tread for my tanks because I'm wearing them out," then that would get funded. That would then pressure against the other accounts, either capital investment or within the OMA budget, and would come against the facility counts.

So, what I found in Europe, then, was not only the problem of establishing the appropriate level of capital investment but, as I was managing the operating programs for facilities and housing in Europe, I would want some bucks to finish fixing up some housing, I would be competing against Op Tempo. Op Tempo was key to aggressive maneuver commanders who really wanted to get out and train. I say again, that was our business in USAREUR, that was important. That kept people off the streets; that kept us ready to go.

Op Tempo could eat stuff up. It was hard for commanders to compete against Op Tempo for bucks for the other things they were responsible for, and that is taking care of the troops and barracks and so forth.

Q: Well, you mentioned this a couple of times, and maybe you could talk a little about this—the whole quality of life issue at USAREUR. I note that USAREUR since the early '80s had been making a real push to improve barracks and family housing and to do things to make life better for soldiers over there, after a long period of neglect of facilities. Was that program continued? Had it achieved a lot of success? You've already indicated it looked like it might lose priority in the budget crunch.

A: No, it had. There was a great deal of change, a great deal of improvement from my time in '79 because the dollars had been there overall, with the rising defense budgets in the Reagan administration, and I think that money had been used wisely and across the board.

At the same time, if you wanted to measure it as General Otis and Scott Smith had laid out the programs, on how much was done and how much was remaining to be done, you found that there were still tanks being maintained in the mud, and still troops living in barracks that still had to be renovated to a better standard. So, a lot had been done; there remained lots to be done. I think it was obvious that the money was running out faster than it was going to be done.

So, Europe's case for arguing and justifying its funding needs was based on pretty good things. We had books and charts and pictures to show the good things that had been funded and the things that remained to be done. The budgets turned down, and it was starting to run out.

We'll talk about this later, but to make the point, this became an essential part of Butch Saint's approach when it came to drawing up plans for any potential drawdown. That was to keep the best facilities—I should say the best installations, not facilities—in terms of providing for the needs of the command.

When we were picking a brigade location where we were going to stay, the fact that it had better facilities, better housing, better support facilities, and better local training areas became a very key factor for that decision. We would select locations out of what was there and thus, then, offset the reduced funding we were to receive. The funding would have been for other places, now no longer going to be needed.

Q: Well, that seems to have required lots of good current data on the facilities, the state of facilities, the backlog of maintenance and repair, all those sorts of issues. So, DCSENGR kept a lot of data, I presume. I mean, that was one of its responsibilities, to keep up with the state of facilities.

A: Yes. We also had the regional DEHs at the Corps levels—the XXII Corps Command, VII Corps, V Corps—who had input data, too, so that we could put together all the necessary data and analysis.

Speaking of quality of life, that was really an emphasis point and something that we needed to take care of. The command took that to heart, and it was across the board. I'm really not only speaking of the facilities, but in all elements there was a real attempt to provide a community life that was American in its aspects of providing for people and for our soldiers and their families who were uprooted from their home, from their home country, and brought over to Europe. We wanted to not only open them to the culture and things German and other nationalities but also provide for them the quality of life essentially equal to what they left behind.

One of the other organizational changes when ISAE disappeared was that the responsibility for furnishings and appliances came to DCSENGR. Now ISAE, of course, had worked for DCSENGR so, in a sense, it was there to begin with.

Let me depart, just to finish one other organizational change that comes to mind too. Previously, the Real Estate Offices had been brought under ISAE, back in the '79 time frame. Now, under the Otis–Smith reorganization, they had come back to report to George Fuentes, the Chief of Real Estate in the Office of the DCSENGR.

One of the things I think we did pretty well was in appliance change out. Our folks were able to order and bring in appliances to a central location and then feed them to all the other

installations in Europe as there was the need. So, that process had been streamlined quite considerably.

Lieutenant General Tom Griffin, Chief of Staff of Allied Forces, Southern Europe, NATO's command in Naples, found out that the Navy, who had command responsibility in the Naples area, would not provide facilities, furniture, or appliances to U.S. service members, even those renting apartments. You have to understand that in Europe it's different from the United States. When somebody leaves an apartment, they take with them the sink and the appliances. You don't rent it with the sinks in. So, for a young soldier to have to buy a sink, where he's never going to have a use for it anyplace else, that was really a hardship. So, appliances, refrigerators, those kinds of things we took care of out of the central office in Giessen, as I mentioned.

Well, anyway, Tom Griffin called up and asked if we couldn't take care of the Army and Air Force and Navy people down there. We did some quick staff work on that and agreed that we could support it from Giessen, now all the way to Naples, Italy. Allied Forces, Southern Europe, had to budget it and get the Navy to cough up some of their bucks to take care of the costs, but we were not going to let soldiers be on their own with respect to appliances. So, we then, as a priority, took things out of the stream and pushed it south to take care of our people in Naples.

Q: I thought we might go back and talk a little bit more about the director of engineering and housing issues, the facilities engineering sorts of issues. Now, the DEHs reported to the community commanders and to the Corps commanders and the 21st Support Command, I guess. So, DCSENGR had sort of technical supervision and support in relation—

A: It really wasn't supervision. We had program responsibility and the support activities that went with that. With the program responsibility, of course, we had the bucks, and we would have to be smart enough to know how to allocate them and that sort of thing. Then we had some special support activities that we provided for people.

But, in fact, the DEH worked for the community commander. The community commander reported to the Corps commander. The DCSENGR reported to the Commander in Chief, and the Corps commander had his own DEH colonel, with his regional staff, which had more intimate support and more support activities, and assistance teams, and that sort of thing to work with.

Q: So, the ISAE assistance teams had gone to the Corps support command?

A: No, the Corps activities already had them too.

Q: Oh, they already had them too.

A: It was seen as a duplication, so General Otis had figured it was not needed at the USAREUR headquarters level and left them down at the Corps level. So, that responsibility, then, was no longer USAREUR's; it was the Corps'.

Q: You might talk about some of the DEH issues that may have come up to DCSENGR, that DCSENGR may have been involved in. I understand one of the issues was heating conversion, coal to oil and district heating. Was that an issue that you got involved in?

A: Oh, a little bit, but not too much because it was well under way during my years there. It was nearly completed. My predecessors had laid all the groundwork, done all the things, and the procedures were well in place. They weren't all converted, but it was all happening. I spent next to no time on it because it was really essentially done.

We had a person on the staff who tracked it. We'd get briefed and we'd follow up the review of contracts and that sort of thing. It was not an issue, which is the way you posed the question.

Q: Right. What sorts of DEH issues tended to come to your attention at the USAREUR level?

A: Well, staffing of people, getting the right kind of people down into the key positions. Again, the Corps and the communities were involved in that because they had the people.

A lot of our interactions had to do with determining next year's construction program, where we could go with things, and the Corps would come up and try to justify their budget dollars to us. So, that was a lot of our interaction, and I would suppose some would call those issues. Others might call it everyday life.

Q: Standard interaction.

A: I think I mentioned earlier, about my other USAREUR experience, that a major Army command is a very interesting and important place to be. USAREUR headquarters was a very dynamic place, and a lot of good folks toiled to do the right thing. A MACOM headquarters is really a swing point in the Army's structure, especially in terms of USAREUR. FORSCOM and TRADOC had it as well, in the terms I'm going to describe, but I think being in a forward Army deployed, the separation of the ocean and the time difference seemed to make it different.

At the MACOM headquarters, we were the ones who interacted with the field, and we put together the programs for the command based on their input. So, the people in muddy boots, the BDUs, the folks in the trenches, the battalions, divisions, and their communities would then see a cut in their programs and their initiatives and would come up to us. Then we had to look downward and analyze and pull out things and package it for the Commander in Chief so that, then, he could take it forward, or we would take it forward and be able to sell it to the Army Staff.

So, we at USAREUR headquarters were really the swing from the BDU Army to the green suit Army, representing the Pentagon. We had to translate programs from the field, package them so they made sense and could attract the dollar in the Pentagon. At the same time, once the dollar was allocated from the Pentagon, we had to take back from the green suit Army and translate it and remold it into the working programs to send back to the field, both the pluses and to allocate the shortage. Some people's aspirations were not going to be met. Yet,

we had to put them into the right kind of packages so the command could be positive and moving ahead, and that sort of thing.

So, we in USAREUR were really at the swing point. We had to speak with the field and understand the field. We had to speak with the Pentagon, Army Staff, and understand the Army Staff.

So, we flew back and forth across the ocean a lot, and we were on the phone a lot as we tried to mold those kinds of packages. So, that's the essence of the whole headquarters, not just DCSENGR.

Q: Of course, going back to something you said earlier, another factor in that is that not only did the whole Army have to come up with its budgetary priorities, but in things like the military construction bill that come out of Congress, Congress also put its own priority sometimes on military construction projects, which might have been different from the Army and USAREUR. So, you were forced to deal with that, as well.

A: The Department of Defense too, of course. The Department of the Army basically addressed those things. We would, from time to time, come back and go with Army Legislative Liaison or the ACE people to visit Hill staffers on various things, or we would entertain congressional groups when they would come over. Basically, the Department of the Army molded that. They had to repackage too, you see, to represent all commands.

Q: As you mentioned earlier, there was a lot of construction. The construction budget was still high, and the Europe Division of the Corps was executing much of that construction program.

A: Yes.

Q: Maybe you could talk about some of the big construction programs, some of the types of facilities that were going on that got priority. I'm thinking of things like—I know EUD executed it, and it was a program that was ongoing—the attic conversion program. I think it caused some controversy with the German government.

A: The controversy happened before I came on—

Q: Before you were there.

A: —because we didn't have any when I was there. Attic conversions were under way when I came aboard. The program started getting frozen out, moneywise, when I was there. It was a very good program because it provided more housing for our soldiers and took care of them better. I don't know who thought it up, but it was a very good program.

Q: What other programs were ongoing to improve housing? I think there was a program probably already ongoing to bring U.S. manufactured housing to Europe and assemble it over there.

A: It was already going on when I arrived. We had the first dedication while I was there. I believe it was at Mainz. It was controversial with the Germans. Some others were put up at Wildflecken.

We visited the first ones. They looked pretty good. I guess people said they wouldn't hold up. I'd like to go over and see them today and see what really happened. Again, although USAREUR remained interested in the execution parts of these programs, it had passed beyond our programming window, you see. The big thing that we did was prepare for the next year. Then once it was in execution, we felt comfortable that EUD was going to execute it. We would then allow EUD to do the construction, and they were tied in very closely down at the installation level. Maybe every now and then there was something where somebody would have to go out and work something between the two, but basically, that was execution, and EUD took care of that very nicely.

Q: Was it during the time that you were there that the Armed Forces Recreation Center [AFRC] at Garmisch, the hotel, was that the controversy?

A: That's a big story, the recreation center and the hotel. Before I left to go over there, I was asked to come visit the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management of the Army, then Michael Stone [later Secretary of the Army]. He talked to me about the importance of the recreation center and a new hotel at Garmisch, and that there was some consternation about USAREUR fighting the problem. The thought was that when I got over there, I certainly ought to make sure things worked out all right. There weren't a lot of facts with that. Then I met also with Judy Miller, who worked in in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs in the nonappropriated side of the house and was working on this issue. So, I had some advanced inkling that it was a sensitive subject.

When I got there, I found out two things. It was very sensitive and controversial, primarily in the interactions between the headquarters, that is, Department of the Army and USAREUR. That it was well under way, the hotel aspects of it, in that General Bill Ray, EUD, had already held a design competition, been out working through the German authorities with different architect/engineer firms, with models and everything else, trying to select a design. The parameters of how many rooms, and this and that, were already established, some being specified back here by the Army's Community and Family Support Center, the nonappropriated fund command that was headed by Major General Bob Joyce, who, incidentally, had been with me as a fellow action officer in Colonels Division, Officer Personnel Directorate, years before.

It was quite controversial, and it was a real tug-of-war between General Joyce, who wanted to run the AFRC, and General Otis, who had the feeling of any good commander that the person that can best take care of his troops is the person there with them, and Garmisch and Berchtesgaden and all the AFRC had always worked under the USAREUR commander. The implications were that it was going to be a direct chain back to Joyce and the Under Secretary of the Army.

So, I found that to be quite controversial. There had been a lot of messages back and forth, and people would speak ill of General Otis back in the Army secretariat. General Otis was really standing by his guns that the right way to do it was the commander on the spot, who has responsibilities for all kinds of other things. There was some recognition that General Otis had this responsibility, but the AFRC also served the Air Force, and the U.S. Air Force, Europe, commander also had a role.

So, what I found out was that it was long past me, as DCSENGR. It was being handled right out of the Office of the Chief of Staff and the Commander in Chief, from the standpoint of the interaction on command relationships. Meanwhile, EUD was driving on, with coordination with Bob Joyce and others as to what should be put into the new facility.

Well, subsequently, the decision was made that AFRC would belong to Bob Joyce and the Community and Family Support Command here in Washington and would not report to USAREUR. So, as bitter a pill as that is to a commander who feels the obligation to take care of his soldiers, that had now been established. General Otis, in his later days of command, and Butch Saint, when he picked up command, honored that and let the Community and Family Support Command here take charge. There was really a lot of bad blood and hard feelings over that.

When he came in, General Saint said: "Enough of that. We don't speak of that anymore. It belongs to another command. The other command will take charge. They'll make the decisions, and if they ask us, we'll contribute."

Later on, when there were problems in budget and support problems, the kind that naturally arise with any function, the AFRC commander would come to USAREUR asking for things, and he was respectfully asked to contact the Community and Family Support Command in Alexandria. The point that General Otis had been arguing was, "Responsibility comes with command, and I'm willing to exercise that responsibility. I think I should exercise it." General Saint came in with the saying: "If you want to take in the receipts, be expecting to pay the bills."

So, my year as Chief of Staff for General Saint, we had very little interaction with AFRC, Europe. We watched and heard how things were going. We heard back from our folks about their happiness or unhappiness with how things were. And, during that particular year, we also told them they might want to reconsider the size of the planned hotel because sometime in the future we might not have as many people in Europe.

However, I left before the Community and Family Support Command took down the old hotel. Then they did not proceed to build the new hotel, and left what's there today—a hole in the ground.

Q: I heard about that when I was over there. At one place, I think, they actually have parking under the ground level.

A: Early on, the concept had been to demolish the old hotel and then build underground parking, two or three stories, in the first phase. Then above that you would raise the hotel and the rest of it.

Q: Well, I know that at some point—perhaps along the same time—that I think it was General Otis who raised some questions, generalized questions about stovepipe organizations in Europe, and asked questions about EUD as well.

A: Yes, he did.

Q: Was that while you were there?

A: I think it really happened before. He wrote back to the Chief of Staff of the Army and said he felt all stovepipe organizations should work for him, that is EUD and all the rest. I believe General Heiberg had communicated back to him.

While I was there, it came up a couple of times in conversations. General Otis might have reminded us of his feelings. There was no ongoing activity that I had to address one way or the other. There was no ongoing action. So, I sensed that all the shots had been fired before I arrived.

Q: Did troop construction play much of a role in the construction program in Europe, the 18th Engineer Brigade, or the civilian labor center?

A: Yes. Those were two very good organizations, and they played some role in supporting installations. The 18th Engineer Brigade's primary role was getting involved in the construction of the major tank ranges at Grafenwöhr and at Wildflecken. The real training key for tank gunnery was being able to identify and engage targets at considerable range before their guns got in range.

Now that we've seen what's happened in the Gulf War, DESERT STORM—our tankers could see Soviet tank rounds hitting in front of ours, not reaching our tanks. Then we were able to pick them off at that range—our Abrams capability and the wisdom of having ranges to train that capability were apparent.

There was a range atop a major hill complex at Wildflecken, and the idea was to convert that into an even longer range, extend it out, build lanes so that tanks could move and shoot on the run and move forward to other positions. So, that was quite an important range. There was another range at Wildflecken, which was to be a Bradley range for firing its weapons, which caused considerable controversy.

The two ranges were held up for a considerable amount of time and occupied a lot of my time in both positions, DCSENGR and Chief of Staff. The first range I mentioned, the tank range, actually was broken free more quickly, and the 18th Engineer Brigade did that construction, committing multiple battalions there over a two-year period. It was a major project, and they did a very nice job.

To continue on, the civilian labor folks—they were a part of and worked under the 18th Brigade and were very skilled folks. When we had inside jobs, drywall and doing that sort of thing, they were the people who really had that capability and skills. Being under the 18th Brigade commander, they were moved here and there and really fixed things up.

Moving back to the ranges, one of the DCSENGR's responsibilities is to be the point of contact with the Germans in the accommodations process.

That word "accommodations" has to do with activities of the United States forces in Europe. It's not real estate; it's that they're accommodating us in particular kasernes. It also had to do with environmental activities, training activities off post, maneuver damage, and a whole bunch of things.

The DCSENGR, because a lot of that is focused on facilities, had been, prior to me, and continued to be, the point of contact on the USAREUR staff to go up and interact with the Bonn government in the Ministries of Defense and Finance. Defense would have some aspects of that, and Finance would have other aspects of that. Major players in that were Ministerialdirector Dr. Shaefgen in Defense and Ministerialdirector Eberhard Hubrich in Finance.

General Kem, Deputy Chief of Staff, Engineer (DCSENG), U.S. Army Europe (third from left), with Mr. Korte of the West German Ministry of Defense (second from left), Dr. Fischer, Ministry of Finance (second from right), and Jorge Fuentes, Chief of the Real Estate Division, DCSENG (right). The picture was taken in Bonn in the spring of 1988.

Underneath those two, who were at the three-star minister level, were Ministerialdirigent Dr. Korte from Defense and Ministerialdirigent Dr. Klaus Fischer from Finance. These division chiefs at the brigadier level—they're all civilians, mind you—focused on our particular activities. These were major interactors with the DCSENGR. I had known Dr. Korte from my previous tour. The senior minister in Finance, Hubrich, had been a prisoner of war during World War II in Florida and spoke perfect English and was very pleasant to deal with. Dr. Shaefgen was also a very nice person and easy to deal with. Dr. Korte was slippery as an eel. You just really had to watch, and not necessarily believe what he said. Dr. Fischer seemed initially to be pretty pleasant; later on he really became a very difficult actor.

To get back to my story—there had been an injunction. Local citizens had gone to court to stop construction of the Bradley range in the north part of the Wildflecken training area. That part of Wildflecken was in the state of Hesse. The southern part of Wildflecken was in the state of Bavaria. The major tank range that I spoke of, that we actually got to start more quickly, was in Bavaria, which is probably why we got to start it.

So, we had to work with different regional entities in working these problems. The Hessians were always more difficult to deal with and were difficult about noise in and around Frankfurt, and so our dealings in Hesse had been a lot more strained and difficult. Here we were in court on the Bradley range. We badly wanted to start both ranges because the modern training of our soldiers, that they were getting elsewhere, needed those kinds of live fire, shoot on-the-move ranges to be able to properly train.

This was a high-priority item to push, and so I had many meetings with Defense and Finance officials in Bonn, trying to get them to move forward, and it was always very difficult. We got into noise, which was the big factor in both ranges. We got into measuring decibels of noise, and groups of citizens and officials would go out, and their experts and our experts would sit there and try to measure decibels. From our view, the decibel levels fell, once you measured them accurately out where the people were listening to them—fell below the standard the Germans were setting. Nevertheless, the people weren't satisfied with that and kept up the attack, trying to get us to close down and not build the range, period. So, we had many interesting times with that, trying to articulate the reasons.

The Germans had outlawed lawnmower use on Sunday in their towns. You couldn't cut your grass on Sunday because the noise would bother your neighbors. The noise we were talking about from our 20-millimeter Bradley weapons two miles away from the town was considerably less than that a neighbor would hear from a lawnmower.

When I left, that Bradley range project had never been started. I don't know if it has today, frankly.

Q: Well, on the German side, you had to deal with their federal system, I guess, the federal agencies, but then the state, and then even the localities. There might be a different perception from what level you were talking about on the German side.

A: Well, the ones I had just mentioned were at the federal level.

Q: The federal level. The lawsuits may have been brought by local people, though.

A: Well, they were, but it was the federal level that we dealt with in the accommodations process. The people who went to court to defend us were really the Defense Ministry. So, Dr. Korte would go to their Supreme Court to make the case for us because it was really the German government who'd invited us over there who were responsible for "accommodating" us. The German government would then say, "Yes, U.S. forces are here for our purpose: NATO, defend freedom. We want them here, and therefore we have to accommodate certain things. These are the rules we're putting out and have agreed to, and thereby we, the German nation, need to uphold those rules."

The next interesting thing that took place a bit while I was engineer, and carried over when I became Chief of Staff, was the caper on bringing the AH–64 Apache helicopters into Europe. The big confrontation took place in Wiesbaden, and it was a similar saga, involving all the same players. The mayor objected to our having aircraft there, and the people did not want the Apache helicopters to come. Apaches had come over for REFORGER in the fall of '87 with General Saint when he commanded III Corps and had been very successful in the FTX up in the north.

So, we wanted to accelerate their arrival down in the south because they were just a tremendous tank killer and such a great addition to our capabilities in NATO. We had a stationing plan that we worked out. We were to get, I remember, ten battalions and place them one in each division and three in each Corps.

The first place we desired to put them was in Wiesbaden, for V Corps, opposite the Fulda Gap. We already had the airfield there in Wiesbaden. We'd taken that over from the Air Force, and it had a lot of hardstands and aprons.

Now, the other thing that had happened in this time frame, technologywise and trainingwise, was the advent of the helicopter flight trainer. The Army has rather sophisticated trainers for Army aviators to use. So, we had wanted to build a flight simulator at Wiesbaden. We had one in Hanau, and we wanted to build one at Wiesbaden because that was going to be a major location for Apache helicopters.

This was being fought by the locals, and we were trying to get that construction under way. We were to the point where EUD was trying to get on with the ability to construct. So, again, I met several times with Dr. Korte and tried to get them to go on, and we were basically enjoined from proceeding. There were something like eighteen trees, mostly scrub ash, that had to come down, and people were using that as a reason not to do the project. These were the same people who didn't want any more helicopters there. They thought if the simulator arrived, then we'd have a reason to put more aircraft there.

The complexity of it was all the interaction with the state, federal, and locals. The Länder president—state president—was reluctant to commit. He waited on the fence. The mayor was

quite against it. The federal government was quite for us at the speaking level, but down at the Korte operational level, he would always seem to bring up a new obstacle—"Don't worry; as soon as I solve this one, we can move." Then when we'd solve that one, then there'd be another new thing that he had to take care of.

As for the eighteen trees, we offered to plant five for one. They were all scrub, a couple or three inches in diameter, maybe a few larger than that. We offered to plant wherever would make the best screen for the populace, and that wasn't satisfactory. So, it just never got resolved.

Meanwhile, then, we wanted the Apache helicopters to come over, and they arrived and were coming down the Rhine by barge. We brought them into Mannheim, where we could have the aviation maintenance folks there assemble them, and then they were to fly to Wiesbaden.

However, we only got two to Wiesbaden before there was an injunction that enjoined us from moving more. This prompted several trips by me to Bonn, trying to elicit the assistance of our ambassador and trying to work with the ministries to try to get permission so that we could move the rest of our Apaches into Wiesbaden.

By now, I had moved up to be Chief of Staff and General Saint had taken over as the Commander in Chief. General [George A.] Joulwan, currently SOUTHCOM commander, was the V Corps commander. He had been the DCSOPS, and General Joulwan and I had come back to visit our Army Staff and the Joint staff, and over to the Department of State, trying to obtain high-level, high-ground kind of approaches to get the governments to allow us to get all of these modernizations completed. We were trying to break the logjam, get them out of the low staff level obstacles and get them up to the major political level for resolution.

So, by this time I'd become Chief of Staff; General Joulwan was now V Corps commander and was working with the Hesse state president. Because I'd been so involved as DCSENGR, I continued as the prime point of contact on the Wiesbaden issue, but we really now had the whole USAREUR staff involved. Jerry Moeller, a civilian who worked in the Host Nation Support Directorate of the headquarters, was an exceptionally talented person with political savvy and understanding. He'd been there for years. We had a lot of meetings trying to figure out ways to make it happen.

General Joulwan would work on the Länder. We would think we'd have an opening, then it would go away. We were enjoined by a court order, and this was a local, Wiesbaden-level court. So when we brought up the complexity of federal, state, and local, here we had a local court had kept us away; and the state government was abiding by that.

I would keep saying to Korte and Shaefgen, "Well, tell us we can go. We'll go." It was really disruptive. By this time, we'd finished putting the helicopters together and flown them to Hanau so they'd be up and in an operational element near maintenance facilities. Hanau had a nice runway at Fliegerhorst. We were going to put Apaches there one day, and at least they

were up in the V Corps area. Expanding Fliegerhorst was also being opposed by the Germans in that particular area.

We put them up there, and finally, at one point in time, it got so bad that we flew some other type of helicopters out of Wiesbaden and flew the AH–64 Apaches in—a one-for-one swap. General Saint made that decision so that we at least had the command working together because, as he found out, they weren't coming up to operational readiness, not being able to train together. Sitting there in Hanau and then flying the pilots from where they lived in Wiesbaden over to their aircraft in Hanau so they could go train just really wasn't working right. So, to maintain operational readiness, he made that swap, and we then had them there at Wiesbaden.

After I left, that issue continued. It was only with the advent of the drawdown and DESERT STORM—when they flew off to fight in the desert showing their worth and effectiveness—and with the concurrent disappearance of the Warsaw Pact that I suppose that issue and our restationing attempts were solved, by going away. I don't know. I'll have to ask General Saint one day.

Q: Did the communities find out that this was going on and protest that the Apaches were being brought in on a one-for-one swap, or did you not hear any outcry?

A: Well, they found out about it after the fact.

Q: After?

A: There were some protestations about it, about it not being straightforward, but our answer was, "We were limited." The argument was, "We shouldn't have any more helicopters at Wiesbaden."

Q: Right.

A: We don't. Operational need was that we needed all of the same kind together.

Q: Right.

A: So, there was a small furor that blew away.

Q: Well, what you've been talking about are some examples of the environmental issues that, I take it, were becoming more and more troublesome all over Germany.

A: Well, they were and they weren't. I mean, USAREUR had a rather aggressive environmental program. We were not environmentally insensitive. We really had put together a lot of things, such as the heating plant business, that not only saved energy but also reduced emissions. I was invited to speak to a symposium of German scientists and environmentalists in Mannheim. I gave about an hour talk, and I had chart after chart telling what we were doing to stop erosion in the training areas and to keep sod and ground cover. Also, the fact that we had converted our heating plants, and I had a chart that showed the great reduction in nitrous

and sulfurous oxides released into the air, based on our conversion of heating plants and based on our conversion of our vehicles to be more environmentally correct.

Oil spills. I mean, we aggressively worked against that. We had oil separators in our motor pools. We really were doing a lot of things and were very sensitive to the environment.

So, yes, there were those who said the reason for not having Apaches was environmental, and there were probably some other motivations tied in with that as well.

Q: Yes. There was the suspicion that some of the opponents didn't want the U.S. military, period, and for whatever reason that was being cited and it would be used.

A: There was some of that, yes. We were, in some areas, a very visible kind of thing, and this was a technique by which we could be opposed.

Q: The German environmental movement, I heard several people say, had developed more slowly and a little behind the U.S. environmental movement.

A: I believe so.

Q: Where they were in the '80s was perhaps where we had been ten years before.

A: Or fifteen. I think that, in the United States, we have gone away from the just cheerleading about the environment and complaining about it to the point of having rational programs, and environmentalists are seeing that rational approaches were being made.

In Germany, they were still in this rant-and-rave mode that nobody can be right. We really didn't get recognition for the kinds of things we were doing. There was a lot of selective listening.

Q: Well, before you went, USAREUR had already started the program of treating wastewater from, say, tank washing facilities and things like that.

A: Right.

Q: To lessen runoff of pollutants and oil and along those lines.

A: Right. Exactly. All those programs were under way.

Q: So, you had a pretty proactive program. You mentioned trees, and in a small country like that—I mean it may seem so strange to us since we have so many—but they're preoccupied with down to the last tree. In some cases to the point where the *forestmeisters* and citizens could really cause problems for projects.

A: Well, they have a lot of trees too. It's a pretty country. They've got a little more temperate, cooler climate than here, so some of them flourish even better. At that time, I think I heard it for the first time while I was there, there was evidence that the Black Forest was suffering from acid rain. It wasn't yet a big clamor, like I'd already experienced several years before

when I was in the Ohio River Division. We're talking about five years before, in the Ohio River basin, where it was very obvious with the people in the Northeast clamoring about the soft-coal-burning plants along the Ohio River that were causing acid rain. So, it was only starting in Germany, I think, during this time frame. From my reading, that's persisted since.

Q: Were there any other major projects held up by, if not environmental objections, other problems with the German government? I've read a little bit about the Rheinberg–Reichel project, and I'm not sure whether that was—was that a controversial issue while you were there?

A: Yes, Rheinberg was a controversy. I'm pretty vague about it, as a matter of fact. I guess time obliterates.

It started back while I was there in the '79 time frame. I remember Charlie McNeill of ISAE going out after the acquisition of the former rug factory because it was an existing building with all the utilities. Part of General Groves' overall thought about stationing in Europe was that if we were going to have people—that is, our operational reserves—potentially fight up in the NORTHAG [Northern Army Group] area, then we ought to have a reinforcing capability for the people who came over to build up the U.S. force. They ought to have a place where there could be a headquarters, and storage of certain things, and be a central place to do that in the NORTHAG area.

So, first was a lot of dialogue and issues about whether it should be NATO funded or not, and we had to go through the whole NATO process. As part of the NATO infrastructure program, the German AFCENT commander had to approve and the German government had to support the projects. Then there were rules in NATO about some part of it could be NATO funded, but if it was just for U.S. facilities, then it's not supposed to be. So, they went some years on that issue.

By the time I arrived in 1987, that was fairly well sorted out, but now there was an issue about whether we could reroute the highway or not, and how much would go where. I went up to visit the area and walked through the huge facility. EUD wanted to get on with the design, and what we put where was sort of conceptually laid out, but it was contingent upon our being able to solve the acquisition of the property and to relocate what was a major thoroughfare right in front of the factory.

The Germans wanted us to put the parking on the far side of the highway and then have our people walk across this thoroughfare to get to their work site. We didn't want that, thinking about terrorist activities. First of all, normal security for any kind of a U.S. installation and storage facility, where you have few people, lots of facilities, is sensitive. Second, then, the fact that terrorists were something to seriously consider in this time frame. Then finally, just the plain fact of having our people subject to having to cross a major thoroughfare. I'm talking, you know, about BMWs and Mercedes roaring by.

So, what we wanted to do was move the highway over several hundred feet. That would allow us to fence on this side, park our people inside the fence, and then they could go in and

out. We would also then have a standoff separation of the building from the fence, terroristwise. We'd also have a separation of our own parking lot from the rest. People wouldn't have to cross it.

Acquisition by the German government of the properties and solving those issues just went awfully slowly. Again, remember Dr. Korte, who found a new obstacle every time he solved the old one. So, that acquisition was going torturously slow.

Later, then, when General Saint came in and the appearance of who should go there was changed, we decided not to proceed further. We dropped it.

Q: You've been involved in the NATO infrastructure program. That was a slow way to get things built, for the most part, wasn't it? Very deliberative. It took a long time. One in which DCSENGR played a pretty key role, I think, in terms of programming.

A: Yes. The DCSENGR was the point of contact with the infrastructure program. I should mention that we did have a higher U.S. headquarters there, and that was EUCOM, located at Stuttgart, Patch Barracks. Many things were service oriented, so we went directly to the Army Staff for things that were service oriented.

Nevertheless, for our Army construction programs, we went through the EUCOM engineer and up to General Galvin. As the CINCUSAREUR, he would add his comments, and part of his annual statement to the Congress would include those aspects of it.

In the NATO infrastructure program, EUCOM had an even more direct role because they were the theater command who determined the theater position on issues. So, EUCOM would take the Navy, Europe; the Air Force, Europe; and the Army, Europe, positions and put them all together. So, our channel on NATO infrastructure projects was through EUCOM.

It was also through AFCENT because the NATO military tactical commander had to comment. Then it went to Brussels and went through the NATO potpourri of actions carried on by the U.S. mission representative.

So, the DCSENGR put together the USAREUR infrastructure program. We had a NATO Infrastructure Branch, and Fred Kishaba was still there, just like he'd been in '79 when he'd worked for me.

It did take a long time because you had to get all those approvals.

Q: I don't have a good sense of this. The Vilseck restationing, was that happening?

A: The Vilseck restationing was ongoing when I arrived and continued. During our annual construction program, each year while I was there, we had some more facilities to add to Vilseck. It had started. It was nice for me to see, having, as I mentioned earlier, been involved in 1978 and '79 in DCSENGR with the master restationing plan in Europe and having come back to the ACE's office and interacted with the Department of Defense,

General Groves, and congressional staffs. The fact that we had, at that time, proposed Vilseck be the first installation converted. It became, in reality, the only real installation converted.

So, Vilseck construction was well under way. They were building housing areas and that sort of thing at the time. Today, as we're drawing down in Europe, one of the brigade places remaining is Vilseck.

Q: To turn, for a minute, to another issue, the time when you were there is about the time, or perhaps a little after the time, when the dollar started to decline—pretty rapidly, I think. Currency fluctuations must have been a pretty major concern when dealing with a budgetary situation.

A: Yes, it was. It was certainly not down as far as it is now, but it was down from its high side, which had gotten up to 3.2 to the dollar earlier, when I'd been over visiting from Belvoir. It hovered between about 1.9 and 1.65, I think, while I was there.

We would always have to be worrying about that at the end of the budget year, having to get a fix from the defense pot to balance things up. So, it always became a factor.

Another one of the big changes in quality of life by this time was that they added an adjustable cost of living allowance and the housing allowance, which fluctuated with the dollar much more rapidly.

Back in my earlier time, you'd have to go so long, and then they'd reset it. Now, the allowance fluctuated as the dollar fluctuated. So, people who were renting on the economy were not hurt so bad in that they had adjustments that could only lag a month, not six months or a year.

Q: You've mentioned the exercises, particularly the REFORGER exercises that were ongoing. Would you like to talk some more about those, and the role of DCSENGR? Was it when you were at DCSENGR, or perhaps later, that there was an attempt, at least, to do a try at E–Force during one of those exercises?

A: Well, the saga of E–Force certainly continued, and I remained very interested in trying to make it all happen. I found that the people in Europe, General Otis, the Corps commanders—General Woodmansee in V Corps, General Ron Watts in VII Corps—were all aggressively for E–Force.

Nevertheless, we still couldn't seem to get it out of TRADOC, as I mentioned. General Thurman had taken over TRADOC, and General Reno's approach was to package it all up, you know, a complete study, and spend some time on it.

Colonel Russ Fuhrman—now a brigadier general—was in Combat Developments and was carrying the ball on E–Force. General Reno talked about it when he came over for the annual engineer conference. E–Force and the REFORGER FTXs were linked considerably during

that time, and throughout the period I retained my aggressive activity to try to make E–Force happen, networking throughout the Army.

At the same time, we were still fighting, I should also say, actions from there to support the M9 ACE. Let me just digress and address the ACE first. There's nothing like messages from the field, especially USAREUR, one-third of the Army, and the fighting part, to support things. I had a call one day from Lieutenant General Max Noah that the ACE was in trouble again and maybe I'd better get some message back. I was supposed to play racquetball at Campbell Barracks at 5:00, and I knew General Otis daily played handball next door. So, I ran over at 4:50 and caught him before he went onto the handball court, and said, "Sir, we need to get a message back supporting the ACE, get the Army leadership, the secretariat, behind it because it's on the cutting block again."

He said, "Fine, but I'm leaving here at about 6:15 and flying off. I'll be gone two days. So, if you can write the message, I'll sign it."

So, I gave up my game of racquetball and ran back to my building, which was only 300 or 400 feet away, and we dashed out a message and got it over to his quarters about 6:10 so he could sign it and send it on back.

In the meantime, I called up to try to get General Galvin to come on-line too. Brigadier General Paul Cerjan was his executive officer at the time, and when I called up to SHAPE, I found out that General Galvin was back in the Pentagon. So, I called back to the Pentagon and got Paul Cerjan on the line and told him what the problem was. He said, "We'll get a message from General Galvin if you can just get us a copy of General Otis's message."

So, we put General Galvin as another addressee on the message and got a copy to him so that he could add his comments to it. So, both went into the Army Staff to support the M9 ACE. I guess I just wish I had a nickel for every time that had to happen in my years at Belvoir and USAREUR, that General Noah and I hooked up communications and tried to make the right thing happen.

Back to E–Force. General Saint was coming over with his III Corps to participate in REFORGER in the fall of '87 up in the NORTHAG area, and I had talked with him before. We'd briefed him on E–Force. He was a solid supporter and really wanted to make it happen.

So, when III Corps came over, they brought the 2d Armored and the 1st Cavalry Divisions. They were supported by Corps engineer battalions from V Corps and VII Corps. We worked hard to get them both to work in the E–Force configuration.

The commander of the 17th Engineer Battalion, with the 2d Armored Division, was Jack O'Neil, and he made it happen in that division. The Corps engineer battalion supporting them, the 317th, supported one maneuver brigade. They were a two-brigade division then, and Jack O'Neil had his 17th Engineer Battalion with the other brigade. So, Jack O'Neil—although he was still the division engineer—put himself down at the brigade headquarters.

It worked magnificently, and the division leadership really extolled the virtues of E–Force. In their after-action reports, in their comments, the brigade commanders said, "Gosh, every time I wanted an engineer, there he was. I always had my lieutenant colonel in the headquarters. I was really getting the kind of support I needed."

So, Jack O'Neil and the 317th commander really made it happen, and I give the credit to Jack O'Neil, who worked with the division staff and talked them into doing it.

On the other hand, the 1st Cav didn't. I flew up to visit them one day, and it was a night and day difference from the 2d Armored. You'd fly out to the brigade headquarters in the 2d Armored and Jack O'Neil, tied in, was right there in the brigade. You'd go out to the bridge site, and there's the 2d Armored assistant division commander talking about how great things are and how much he really liked this new E–Force concept. I mean, everybody knew about it.

Then we visited the 8th Engineer Battalion commander, 1st Cav Division, and he wasn't even in the fight. He was far behind either of the brigades and so was his supporting Corps engineer battalion, the 82d. Neither one of them was tied in with the rest of the combined arms team. I mean, they were not a factor in the battle.

The 1st Cav had not gone to E–Force. I don't know whether it was that General John Yeosock, the division commander, thought it was unnecessary, or whether that engineer battalion commander had not carried the mantle, as had to happen for success. I mean, it took the division engineer to carry it in and say, "This is how we ought to do it." My thought was in the 8th, he was not a factor in the division.

Out of that experience, General Saint was even more convinced. With the 2d Armored really positive about E–Force, the words went back, and so we had positive support out of REFORGER '87.

We then began preparing for REFORGER in the fall of '88. By that time General Saint had arrived as the Commander in Chief and I was Chief of Staff. So, once again we were working to sell the Army leadership that E–Force was the way to go.

I had gone back to the engineer commanders conference in May at Belvoir, that General Reno hosted. General Thurman talked there and said, "What we're going to do with E–Force is have it go through the 7th Light Infantry Division validation process."

What had happened there was that, before they had established the 7th, they had developed the concept of the light infantry division. They then organized the division and took it to the National Training Center and tested their concept and then modified the organization according to what they'd found.

So, General Thurman said, "That's what we're going to have to do to have E–Force." Well, that was a big obstacle. It was an opportunity, but it was an obstacle. I mean, it was an opportunity because it sounded like now we had a path to succeed. Having been stymied here

and there because nobody really was sure, now at least there was established a way of moving it.

The obstacle part, though, was it's one thing when the Chief of Staff of the Army—Wickham, in the case of the 7th Light Infantry Division—puts everything behind it and says, "We're going to reorganize." Then all systems convert, and they document, and they send people in there, personnel systems, logistics systems. All the tapes that you requisition against, all the codes, all that took place so they could have a light division. That didn't take place for E–Force. We couldn't do that. We're talking about an organization that didn't really exist.

So, we went about to do that. Meantime, there were some other structural changes in Europe, starting the drawdown of the Pershing missiles. General Saint approved keeping certain spaces allocations from that to take care of the E–Force numbers. By this time, as an outgrowth of REFORGER '77, the Corps engineer battalions had been mechanized. We had also moved from staffing level two to staffing level one, and so they were more robust at the Corps battalions and they could better interchange with divisional battalions.

So, we took it as an opportunity and said, "Well, we're going to drive on, and for future REFORGERs, engineers are going to be in E–Force configuration."

Meanwhile, then, General Reno left and General Schroeder came in as commandant of the Engineer School. It was too late to do the test during the REFORGER in the fall of '88. General Woodmansee commanded the V Corps. Jay Braden commanded the 130th Brigade in V Corps. Colonel Clair Gill arrived to command 7th Engineer Brigade in VII Corps commanded by Lieutenant General Ron Watts.

Once again, VII Corps ad hocked it as best they could and put battalions together. We didn't have the colonels to be the division brigade commander, but VII Corps still worked it and came up with solid lessons learned that E–Force was the kind of organization needed.

Up in the 130th Brigade they were not quite so precise and results weren't so clear.

Meanwhile, then, we continued to push. General Saint, with a message to General Vuono, indicated he wanted to try to get E–Force in and said, "We want to organize and implement the E–Force organization so we can do General Thurman's 7th Light Infantry Division test of the concept during REFORGER '89."

Now, to do that we needed to reorganize about January the year before so we could get people to put forward, and we could requisition a colonel and work in the personnel and logistics systems. We took to heart what General Thurman had said. An important part of that is documentation. You've got to get your computer tapes with all the right numbers and this and that, the equipment and people all in it, and bring it back.

Well, we reached an impasse in DCSOPS, and General [Wilson A.] Shoffner was an obstacle this time. We worked toward getting approval to document, and we were about to miss the window. We had to have a documented organization to requisition. "What's wrong?" we

asked. "We've done everything General Thurman, the TRADOC commander, said we needed to do." We had all the spaces. We had most of the right grades.

We were going to have more operator types, but if we got it done in January, we could be ready for the REFORGER FTX, which was to take place a year later. So, we had time to do it, if we could get it going.

Time moved on. February went by. March went by. They said, well, they would allow us to stuff in the documentation off-line once we got the rest of the approvals. General Saint was really pushing and trying, and we were just getting stiff-armed, I think, by the commander of TRADOC, the Chief of Staff, and the DCSOPS in the form of General Shoffner.

Then General Schroeder, trying to break the dam, had a briefing for General Thurman to try to push the E–Force organization for his approval so he could take it up to General Vuono so he could give the final approval, so we could get the documentation and proceed with the 7th Light Infantry Division type test.

General Thurman just blew the briefing apart. He evidently forgot his commitment and tasking at the engineer commanders conference that we would have to go through the 7th Light Infantry Division process. He said, "It's not ready. You haven't done your evaluation. You haven't done your analysis." This seemed to me just to be a way of throwing E–Force out and stiff-arming us—USAREUR and engineers—because we were proceeding along the path he had directed and because we had done those analysis things earlier that he said needed to be done.

This test during REFORGER was the next essential step. We had a major commander, General Saint in Europe, who was asking for it. General RisCassi, the Vice Chief, was supportive in facilitating the process.

So, it came down to a great culminating point, with messages from Saint and Thurman, back channels back and forth, and General Vuono decided that it would not be documented at that time and we would not go forward with it. Then General Saint said, "Well, I'm going to test it on my own, ad hoc." General Vuono, the Chief of Staff, said, "Fine, go ahead. TRADOC will support your evaluation."

With that, our plans to fully do it with a documented organization went away, but we proceeded to do it on our own. Within the Corps—and this was to be a V Corps versus VII Corps REFORGER FTX—plans were made to reorganize into E–Force configurations. Commanders were designated and S–3s for the engineer brigade headquarters and all of that. The headquarters elements were designated, and which battalions were going to support which brigades were designated, and REFORGER complements were tied in.

We asked the Engineer School to send over evaluators, and TRADOC sent over evaluators. General Schroeder, by this time, had people come in to do various analyses, and he had then recast E–Force into the terms of the Engineer Restructure Initiative. Now, see, we're talking about a January '90 REFORGER. By this time, I was back in Washington as Deputy Chief of

Engineers. Bill Ray was the DCSENGR. Now, I was networking from the Deputy Chief of Engineer's office to Dan Schroeder at Leonard Wood, to Bill Ray in Heidelberg, and Russ Fuhrman, who was now the 130th Brigade commander, having been the lieutenant colonel action guy at the Engineer School with me, trying to make it all work out.

General John Foss was now commanding general at TRADOC, and General Schroeder presented to him the Engineer Restructure Initiative, which had certain modifications toward the Army of the future concept. Certain of those modifications couldn't come about until the Army switched. For instance, under General Foss's concept, you wouldn't have mechanics in battalions. They'd be back in the division support command structure. So, the engineer battalions, likewise, shouldn't have mechanics.

Well, that's fine, to have that as the objective organization, but the tank battalions and infantry battalions at this time still had mechanics, and support command had not been restructured to have them, so therefore, the restructured engineer battalion needs to keep them.

So, when you lined it all up, the refinements and the put backs, the Engineer Restructure Initiative was very similar to E–Force. The bridge company was taken out of the division and put at Corps, which is something that we had thought of originally in E–Force but had kept it in the organization as a fallback, give up position if necessary to achieve spaces.

So, essentially, by the time you put back in today's needs—because the Army was that way today—we had what we needed: that is, an engineer battalion in each maneuver brigade and a brigade commander with a slimmed down headquarters at division.

Then that organization was tested in January during the REFORGER FTX. Colonel Joe Oder went over to be the chief evaluator out of the ACE's shop. The evaluations were all very positive. We had a bunch of new maneuver commanders, and it was, again, well received. Once again, it was shown to the maneuver elements that E–Force was the way the engineers needed to be as part of the heavy combined arms team.

The VII Corps commander at that time was Lieutenant General Fred Franks. Later, when DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM came about, General Franks called back to General Hatch and said, "I want to go with my engineers in an E–Force format. Give me some colonels." The system then provided the colonels to head the engineer brigades, and the E–Force concept was proven on DESERT STORM's very aggressive and lethal battlefield—and is being implemented today throughout the Army.

I guess the only other anecdote I would relate was that in the late spring of 1989 there was a senior leaders training conference at Grafenwöhr that General Vuono, General Thurman, General [Leonard P., III] Wishart, and others came to. It was hosted by General Saint and presided over by General Vuono. At lunch the last day, we were at the table with General Vuono on one side and General Thurman on the other. General Vuono looked over to me and said, "Well, Sam, I haven't heard much about E–Force. How's it coming?"

I responded, "Well, I don't know. It's not in my hands these days. I know that all the division and Corps commanders around here say it's the only way to go."

With that, General Thurman made a visible wince and commented that everyone at the conference had come up to tell him about the need for E–Force.

Q: Where did the major reservations lie about E–Force? Was it manpower?

A: Oh, it's hard for me to say. I don't know. It was always my frustration. I briefed General Vuono on it initially in May of '85, just as he was leaving the Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, to go be the Army DCSOPS.

It was the May before he was supposed to leave in June or July. It was a new initiative, and it did all the things he had been challenging us commandants to do: looking forward, trying to make the combined arms team more effective, emphasizing productivity of equipment over people, slimming down, the combined arms team. I thought this was an opportunity for him to pick it up and see it as one of his things.

I think the problem was that I hit him in the last couple of months of his tour at the Combined Arms Center and he had no time to assimilate it, adopt it, and take it over. Thereafter he was fairly lukewarm.

The next year, General RisCassi came in. He bought the concept and was supportive. I briefed General Richardson, commanding general of TRADOC. He bought it and told me to go brief General Vuono in DCSOPS. I remember that General Thurman was the Vice then. General Vuono said, "Not the right time. General Wickham's leaving. You shouldn't hit him with anything in the last months of his command. Wait."

So, we waited. General Richardson bought it and was very supportive. He was a tough man to convince—I mean, you've really got to lay it all out. We did, and he bought the E–Force concept.

General Vuono wanted to wait at that particular moment. So, then he came back to TRADOC and then challenged us to do certain things, which took some more time. By the time we had it ready to go, then he was saying it was too late for General Wickham. Then he graduated from TRADOC to replace Wickham as Chief of Staff.

So, I don't know—E–Force just kept getting pushed aside. Other things had priority of their focus. It was just difficult for me to understand. I briefed General Thurman, then the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, on it one other time—the initiative we were doing. It seemed to answer all the things he and others were saying that we ought to be doing: bring the engineers in closer to the combat Army, integrate engineers more into the combined arms team, train in peace like you will fight in war. Well, we always put a Corps engineer battalion with the heavy division in war, and they went to fight together, but they weren't ready to work together.

We showed that E–Force at the National Training Center worked. We showed that E–Force worked on the REFORGER FTX battlefield. We did analytics. We did everything possible, and the briefings indicated that it really met their challenge as to every facet.

We did all the numbers on force structure that showed that we had it right and within space resources. We did all the equipment numbers, and we would be short something like, for the whole Army force, six or seven M–88s, nothing else.

So, to answer your question, I don't know why those three artillerymen didn't understand how the engineer fit the battle in that manner, integrated into the combined arms team, and that was the way it should be. Armor and infantry maneuver commanders agreed.

Well, I think that wrapped up E–Force, for the most part, but it prompts me to think of one other thing that we did in my year as DCSENGR. There always seemed to be a little bit of 7th Engineer Brigade versus 130th Engineer Brigade kind of differences. They did not always agree on things.

Clair Gill and Jay Braden were the commanders. I thought we'd worked all that out, and I think they were fairly successful, but not totally. Jay had been the deputy in VII Corps—the 7th Engineer Brigade. Then he went to the 130th Engineer Brigade, so I would have thought those things would be worked out.

One of the things we did at that time was get the senior engineer colonels together. I'm talking about the three brigade commanders and the three Corps command DEHs, who along with the DCSENGR and the assistant DCSENGR would be sort of a board of directors kind of thing for engineers, as I saw it.

Even though they didn't work for me, we would work together and talk engineer issues and problems. One of the key aspects was trying to work a personnel system so that we had a way of progressing to put the right people in to be battalion S–3s and execs. Majors getting that experience was crucial to their development in the great scheme of things as it was coming out.

I thought that the "engineer board of directors" was rather successful and enjoyable. We got together quarterly, and we would include, when he was in town, the 412th Engineer Command commander too.

One other item that came up, that we haven't talked about yet, had to do with the soldiers' quality of life. It was something that we initiated when I was DCSENGR, and I followed it later as Chief of Staff, and eventually we carried the day. It had to do with furniture.

The DCSENGR had the responsibility—first through ISAE, now in DCSENGR—for the furniture program in Europe. It was really managed in the commands, V Corps, VII Corps, and throughout where they maintained the warehouses that had the furniture in it to go into soldiers' quarters.

Some years before—I came over in ’87, and so I’d say that would be in about ’85 probably—it was decided that it was probably in the best interests of everyone if they brought their own furniture over. Rather than having this big inventory of government furniture to issue people, traded in and out, and having to have a maintenance activity and a refurbishing activity and that sort of thing, it was probably more economical to go ahead and let people bring their own things.

It had been tried at certain higher grade levels: senior sergeant and major and above, who then had the ability to bring the full complement of furniture over, and they called that “full JTR” [joint travel regulations].

Then it was decided to expand full JTR to everyone, not just the senior people. A briefing was prepared and taken to General Thurman proposing that that policy be approved.

He not only disapproved it at that time but decided that the people who had previously been able to bring their furniture over—the senior sergeants, the majors, and above—would no longer be permitted to bring their furniture over, and they would go back to the other policy, which had the acronym of “limited JTR.”

I was one of those impacted by that change of policy in that, whereas I thought when I was assigned as DCSENGR I was going to take all my furniture over, I had to go over with my limited JTR allowance of 2,000 pounds and get government furniture. I found when I got there that the government furniture wasn’t available, and some of it was ratty, and it took an awful long time to get it.

I was the DCSENGR responsible for the whole program, so I figured if that’s the kind of action I was getting, it must be not too good throughout the command. So, I looked around and found out it wasn’t very good: a lot of complaints and a lot of unhappy wives and families.

It was very limiting. I mean, you could have only two end tables. You were really limited to what you could do. You couldn’t bring your own over.

So, General Otis said, “Well, why don’t we do something about it? Why don’t we go back?” We did the numbers and found it was still more economical to do it the full JTR way.

Besides, now the Department of the Army was reneging on the program amounts of money that they had put in the program to buy the furniture to support giving everybody furniture rather than having them bring their own. So, on the one hand, they were reneging on the money available, and on the other hand, the policy had caused a lot of complaints and really lessened the quality of life for soldiers and their families.

We started doing the numbers, and we got some help from the analytic capability available in the headquarters to do a study and figure out what it should be. What we proposed was that we have a “flexible JTR,” and that is, people could bring what they wanted, and we would fill in the gaps around that.

Now, the idea was, a lot of young soldiers don't have a lot, so they really do need some furniture. Others have a lot, and the Army was paying to store it in the United States and, at the same time, paying to have furniture in Europe to give them, and didn't have enough to do both.

So, we had them both angry. We couldn't take care of the soldier and his needs; we didn't have enough. We couldn't replace what the senior people were needing when they left theirs in the United States.

We thought, based on our experience with appliances, refrigerators, and stoves, where we really had the inventory down, that we could operate the system centrally, get out of the ratty warehouses spread throughout the command, have fewer warehouses, and really get on a serve-the-people kind of basis.

So, we had a lot of talks, and back and forth messages, and that sort of thing. This carried on into my time as Chief of Staff. The study person—I don't remember her name—did a wonderful job on the study. She was sent by the Department of the Army over to intern in Europe and learn the trade and get experience in a working environment.

Anyway, she and I came back and briefed the Army Staff and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Art Brown, by this time, and sold them on the idea that we could then reverse the process one more time.

Q: That's a big operation for as many soldiers as are stationed in Europe, and as much movement back and forth as there is.

A: Oh, it was a big operation. It caused the hiring of a lot of Germans and it cost a lot of money.

Q: Interesting.

Let me ask a question that goes a little bit back to the construction issue. This may not be a fair question, but looking at EUD from the perspective you did at DCSENGR, what kind of a job was it doing? Was it doing a big job at that point? Other than some of the issues you've talked about, were there any major construction issues or problems that came up, and how would you evaluate EUD at its peak, as we look back now, since construction dropped off and the size of the organization dropped off?

A: Well, you may recall from our earlier sessions, during my 1979 time at the Office of the DCSENGR as Chief of Installations and Construction, that I was a harsh critic of EUD, but yet saw, at that time, that with the arrival of Joe Higgs and other folks they were really trying to make a change in engineering and project management.

I was very pleased to arrive back in DCSENGR and find an altogether productive, top-flight European Division. So, I thought very highly of EUD during my year as DCSENGR and a year as Chief of Staff. I thought Bill Ray was a super commander, and Joe Higgs and John Blake really were topflight SESs. They had a bunch of other top-flight people that interacted well. They were positive, can do, and had a feeling for being close to the people they served.

They were like other districts and divisions in the Corps, except they had a very large military customer and a very spread command. So, I thought they did a super job, and I thought they were most professional.

Q: Other DCSENGR issues that we need to talk about?

A: That kind of takes me out of the DCSENGR category, I think.

Chief of Staff, USAREUR

Q: In June, I think it was of 1988, you went from the position of DCSENGR to Chief of Staff, USAREUR. This is about the time of the change of commanders, right? About the same time.

A: It was exactly the time—

Q: Exactly?

A: —because General Otis and General Fiala retired at the same ceremony on the parade field there, and General Saint took command and I became Chief of Staff.

Q: General Ray came up?

A: General Ray came up to be the DCSENGR at that time. That's right.

Q: Well, new job, new commander. Was that a pretty tough transition, or was it, by virtue of your experience there, not so bad?

A: It was not too tough a transition for me because I'd been there a year and watched General Fiala and General Otis be involved in numerous issues facing the command—the Apache helicopters in Wiesbaden, the noise at Wildflecken, and the Vander Shaaf committee had just come through that we'll talk about in a minute. And, oh, a number of the major issues involved in the REFORGER exercises, all of those kinds of things. So, I really had a feeling for what was going on.

I also knew General Saint from the past. We had been in the same company at West Point, and we came to Europe in 1976 for our colonel commands, his the 11th Armored Cav Regiment and mine the 7th Engineer Brigade. Immediately before that we had gone to Monterey together for language school, and we'd been together there three weeks. We'd known each other here and there, and I'd seen him at Fort Hood when he commanded III Corps. A lot of our year at Headquarters, USAREUR, '78–'79, after the commands, we were there together.